Claims

1. A portable screen element comprising:

a screen member having a top surface, a bottom surface, two opposite sides, and two opposite ends;

at least one bar member having a top side and a bottom side wherein said bar member traverses the top surface of said screen member; and

at least one inverted hook member extending from a top side of said bar member.

2. The portable screen element of claim 1 wherein said screen element includes one bar member secured between opposite sides of said screen member and at least two inverted hook members extending from said bar member.

3. The portable screen element of claim 1 wherein said screen element includes at least two bar members secured between opposite ends of said screen member and at least one inverted hook member extending from each of said bar members.

4. The portable screen element of claim 1 further comprising means for releasably securing the bottom surface of said screen member to a top surface of a frame.

5. The portable screen element of claim 4 wherein said releasable securing means includes a lip extending from the bottom surface of said screen member such that said lip member fits over an upper end of the top surface of the frame.

6. The portable screen element of claim 4 wherein said releasable securing means includes at least one hook member extending from the bottom surface of said screen member such that said hook member engages an upper end of the top surface of the frame.

7. The portable screen element of claim 4 wherein said releasable securing means includes a locking mechanism positioned in at least two corners of said screen member.

8. The portable screen element of claim 7 further comprising a triangular shaped support plate positioned over the top surface of each corner of said screen member.

9. A separating apparatus for classifying and recycling excavated material comprising:

a frame member having a slanted grate having two opposite sides and two opposite ends wherein said slanted grate forms less than a ninety degree angle relative to a ground surface; and

a removable screen member positioned on a top surface of said frame member, said screen member having two opposite sides, two opposite ends, a top surface, a bottom surface, and at least one inverted hook member extending from the top surface of said screen member.

10. The separating apparatus of claim 9 further comprising at least one flange extending from a bottom side of said slanted grate.

11. The separating apparatus of claim 9 further comprising at least one bar member traversing the top surface of said removable screen member wherein said bar member has a top side and a bottom side and said inverted hook member extends from the top side of said bar member.

12. The separating apparatus of claim 11 wherein said removable screen member includes one bar member secured between opposite sides of said screen member and at least two inverted hook members extending from said bar member.

13. The separating apparatus of claim 11 wherein said removable screen member includes at least two bar members secured between opposite ends

of said screen member and at least one inverted hook member extending from each of said bar members.

14. The separating apparatus of claim 11 wherein said removable screen member further comprises means for releasably securing the bottom surface of said screen member to a top surface of a frame.

15. The separating apparatus of claim 14 wherein said releasable securing means includes a lip extending from the bottom surface of said screen member such that said lip member fits over an upper end of the top surface of the frame.

16. The separating apparatus of claim 14 wherein said releasable securing means includes at least one hook member extending from the bottom surface of said screen member such that said hook member engages an upper end of the top surface of the frame.

17. The separating apparatus of claim 14 wherein said releasable securing means includes a locking mechanism positioned in at least two corners of said screen member.

18. The separating apparatus of claim 16 further comprising a triangular shaped support plate positioned over the top surface of each corner of said screen member.

19. The separating apparatus of claim 14 wherein said releasable securing means comprises a safety chain and hook assembly.

20. A method for separating and recycling excavated material comprising the steps of:

positioning a frame member having a slanted grate relative to a ground surface on the ground;

placing a removable screen over a top of the slanted grate by engaging hooks extending from a top surface of the removable screen member with a moving vehicle or apparatus; and

depositing excavated material on the top surface of the removable screen member such that the excavated material is separated by passing through both the removable screen member and the slanted grate.

21. The method of claim 20 further comprising the step of securing the removable screen member to the slanted grate before depositing excavated material on the removable screen member.